

**Final Environmental Impact Statement
Southern Intertie Project
Kenai Peninsula to Anchorage, Alaska
July 2002**

Lead Agency: Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Cooperating Agencies: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Interior
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Defense

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ABSTRACT

The Southern Intertie Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) provides public comments and responses, and supplemental information to the Draft EIS (DEIS). The DEIS describes the affected environment and environmental consequences of constructing and operating a new 138kV transmission line between the Kenai Peninsula and Anchorage. The project is being proposed by the Intertie Participants Group (Applicant) in order to improve the overall Railbelt electrical system reliability and energy transfer capabilities between the Kenai Peninsula and Anchorage. The primary federal action entails whether to approve the necessary permits to construct and operate the proposed project across federal lands administered by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The Applicant has filed for a right-of-way across federal lands on the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (KNWR), a Conservation System Unit designated under the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will determine whether to issue a permit for regulated activities in waters of the United States; decisions made by the Rural Utilities Services determine whether or not to provide federal funding for the project.

Volume I of the Southern Intertie Project FEIS contains a Summary, Chapter 1 – Public Comments and Responses, Chapter 2 – Supplemental Information, and three appendices. Appendix A contains the USFWS Compatibility Determination; Appendix B contains the USACE Draft Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation; and Appendix C contains the public notices distributed regarding the DEIS. Volume II of the FEIS defines and outlines the project Mitigation Plan.

The document has been organized to enable the reader to review the comments received on the DEIS and the responses to those comments. Additional information contained in Chapter 2 supplements the responses to comments and issues discussed in Chapter 1.